

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1 – 14. (canceled)

15. (currently amended) A dough mixer for the production of dough, comprising:
a closed housing with horizontal housing axis, the housing having two inner, essentially circular, juxtaposed, coaxial and separated surfaces between which two casing surface sections extend which run in an arc along the same casing line and change in the upper and lower region into a flat surface section, the flat surface sections each at least partially formed by the surface of a sliding blade in its closed position, wherein one circular surface, across from a circular surface from which a drive shaft extends for ~~a the~~ kneading element, has a slight conical or domed form projecting into the housing, coaxially to the rotational axis of the kneading element; and
the ~~a~~ kneading element operating with a rotational axis coaxial or parallel to the housing axis.

16. (currently amended) A dough mixer for the production of dough, comprising:
a closed housing with horizontal housing axis, the housing having two inner, essentially circular, juxtaposed, coaxial and separated surfaces between which two casing surface sections extend which run in an arc along the same casing line and change in the upper and lower region into a flat surface section, the flat surface sections each at least partially formed by the surface of a sliding blade in its closed position, wherein one circular surface, across from a circular surface from which a drive shaft extends for ~~a the~~ kneading element, has a distinctive conical, nose cone-shaped, or cylindrical form with hemispherical end that is coaxial or parallel to the rotational axis of the kneading element; and
the ~~a~~ kneading element operating with a rotational axis coaxial or parallel to the housing axis.

17. (currently amended) A dough mixer for the production of dough, comprising:

a closed housing with horizontal housing axis, the housing having two inner, essentially circular, juxtaposed, coaxial and separated surfaces between which two casing surface sections extend which run in an arc along the same casing line and change in the upper and lower region into a flat surface section, the flat surface sections each at least partially formed by the surface of a sliding blade in its closed position, wherein one circular surface, across from a circular surface from which a drive shaft extends for a ~~the~~ kneading element, has one or more holes for supply of liquid ingredients into the housing, the one or more holes located in a central region of the circular surface, within a circular track defined by ends of the kneading element; and

the ~~a~~ kneading element operating with a rotational axis coaxial or parallel to the housing axis.

18. (previously presented) A dough mixer for the production of dough, comprising:

a closed housing with horizontal housing axis, the housing having two inner, essentially circular, juxtaposed, coaxial and separated surfaces between which two casing surface sections extend which run in an arc along the same casing line and change in the upper and lower region into a flat surface section, the flat surface sections each at least partially formed by the surface of a sliding blade in its closed position; and

a kneading element operating with a rotational axis coaxial or parallel to the housing axis,

wherein the housing of the dough mixer and the kneading element are occasionally subjected to moving hot air introduced through a hole or nozzle and which exits through a discharge opening in the housing, the hot air generated by a drive motor of the dough mixer or from a pneumatic system and heated prior to entry, the hot air sterilizing the housing and the kneading element, loosening any bits of dough or leftover ingredients and transporting same by means of the exiting stream of air.

19. (previously presented) A dough mixer for the production of dough, comprising:

a closed housing with horizontal housing axis, the housing having two inner, essentially circular, juxtaposed, coaxial and separated surfaces between which two casing surface sections extend which run in an arc along the same casing line and change in the upper and lower region into a flat surface section, the flat surface sections each at least partially formed by the surface of a sliding blade in its closed position; and

a kneading element operating with a rotational axis coaxial or parallel to the housing axis, wherein the kneading element includes:

an arm extending radially from an end of a drive shaft of the kneading element;

two fixed pins, one pin being attached to each free end of the arm, the pins having a longitudinal axis parallel to the rotational axis of the kneading element; and

two cylindrical sleeves, one sleeve attached to each fixed pin by an axially recessed hole allowing the sleeve to freely turn relative to the fixed pin, wherein terminal regions of each sleeve are rounded-off, round-ended, or nose cone-shaped.

20. (previously presented) The dough mixer of claim 19, wherein the arm is fastened off-center to the drive shaft such that the two fixed pins turn with varying radius about the rotational axis of the kneading element.

21. (previously presented) A dough mixer for the production of dough, comprising:

a closed housing with horizontal housing axis, the housing having two inner, essentially circular, juxtaposed, coaxial and separated surfaces between which two casing surface sections extend which run in an arc along the same casing line and change in the upper and lower region into a flat surface section, the flat surface sections each at least partially formed by the surface of a sliding blade in its closed position; and

a kneading element operating with a rotational axis coaxial or parallel to the housing axis, wherein the kneading element includes:

a plurality of arms, each extending radially along a drive shaft of the kneading element at some distance from an end of the drive shaft;

a fixed pin attached to each free end of each of the plurality or arms, each fixed pin having a longitudinal axis parallel to, and not equidistant from, the rotational axis of the kneading element; and

a cylindrical, freely turning sleeve attached to each fixed pin.

22. (previously presented) The dough mixer of claim 21, wherein an inner housing wall, corresponding to the one circular surface across from the circular surface from which the drive shaft extends for the kneading element, is replaceable with a housing wall that changes the distance between the two circular surfaces, and depending on this change in distance, the sleeves are replaced by sleeves with appropriate longitudinal extension.

23. (previously presented) A dough mixer for the production of dough, comprising:

a closed housing with horizontal housing axis, the housing having two inner, essentially circular, juxtaposed, coaxial and separated surfaces between which two casing surface sections extend which run in an arc along the same casing line and change in the upper and lower region into a flat surface section, the flat surface sections each at least partially formed by the surface of a sliding blade in its closed position;

a kneading element operating with a rotational axis coaxial or parallel to the housing axis; and

a metering device having a cylindrical container with vertical longitudinal axis, the cylindrical container including:

a dust storage area in an upper region;

a metering mechanism in a lower region;

at least one dust stirring element operating in the upper region;

at least one metering stirring element operating in the lower region;

a distribution cone in the lower region;

a metering disk with a plurality of metering holes equally spaced from one another, and equally spaced from a rotational axis of the metering disk, the metering holes being located along a rim of the metering disk;

a shaft that rotates coaxially with the vertical longitudinal axis of the cylindrical container to activate the dust stirring elements, the metering stirring elements, the distribution cone, and the metering disk to provide pre-determined portions of dust to the dough mixer; and

an annular, funnel-like partition, through a central opening of which an upper part of the distribution cone extends to form an annular duct for the dust to enter the metering region.

24. (canceled)

25. (previously presented) The dough mixer with metering device of claim 23, wherein at least one dust stirring element operates, extending radially from the distribution cone near an upper surface of the partition.

26. (previously presented) The dough mixer with metering device of claim 23, wherein the metering disk is positioned between a fixed, level bottom plate of the cylindrical container and an annular, fixed sieve, and the bottom plate includes an outflow opening within the track of the metering holes of the rotating metering disk.

27. (previously presented) The dough mixer with metering device of claim 26, wherein the sieve includes ducts through which the dust passes and wherein at least one metering stirring element, extending radially from the distribution cone, passes close to the sieve during rotation of the cone.

28. (canceled)

29. (previously presented) A method for producing dough, comprising the steps of:
a. charging a mixing region with flour-like or dust-like ingredients by free fall;

- b. homogenizing and aerating the flour-like or dust-like ingredients by rotating a kneading element at a relatively high speed;
- c. introducing liquid ingredients to the flour-like or dust-like ingredients;
- d. preparing a dough mixture by rotating the kneading element at a lower speed to form and roll together little dough clumps;
- e. preparing the dough by rotating the kneading element at an even lower speed to roll out and roll thin the dough;
- f. forming a single, compact, balled together dough mass by rotating the kneading element at a lowest speed; and
- g. discharging the single, balled together dough mass by centrifugal force via the rotating kneading element and by gravity.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein charging the mixing region by free fall occurs through a charging opening in the mixing region equipped with a sliding blade.

31. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the relatively high speed is between about 2,500 and 3,000 rpm.

32. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the lower speed is between about 950 and 1,400 rpm.

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the little dough clumps are formed and rolled together by repeated action of rotating sleeves of the kneading element.

34. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the even lower speed is between about 850 and 920 rpm.

35. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the dough is rolled out and rolled thin by freely turning sleeves against a lower level surface of the mixing region.

36. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the lowest speed is between about 700 and 820 rpm.

37. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein discharging the single, balled together dough mass occurs through a discharge opening in the in the mixing region equipped with a sliding blade.

38. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the rotational direction of the kneading element changes one or more times during various method steps.

39. (canceled)

40. (previously presented) A dough mixer for the preparation of dough, comprising:

a closed housing having two inner, essentially circular, juxtaposed and separated surfaces between which two casing surface sections extend which run in an arc and change in the upper and lower region into a flat surface section, the flat surface sections each at least partially formed by the surface of a sliding blade in its closed position; and

a kneading element including:

at least one fixed pin extending from an arm communicating with a drive shaft of the kneading element and having a longitudinal axis parallel to a rotational axis of the drive shaft; and

a sleeve rotatably attached to each pin, the sleeve capable of free spin about a longitudinal axis of the fixed pin.

41. (previously presented) The dough mixer of claim 40 having a plurality of pins and sleeves, wherein the sleeves have varying outside diameters, cross-sections, and shapes

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depending on a consistency of the dough being prepared, properties of ingredients being mixed, or a percentage of liquid ingredients employed.

42. (canceled)